

# The Social Service Bulletin

MID-MONTH NUMBER

To strengthen the comradeship, methods and message of members of  
The Methodist Federation for Social Service.

Volume 23

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No. 8

## Our Future?

By H. F. W.

Once more we save money by sending you this Bulletin. But it is the last time for the *Mid-Month* so far as we can see.

Our new Bulletin memberships are only 146 to date. At this rate we cannot keep going.

Our ordinary receipts kept up very well last month, but they remain steadily behind our expenditures.

Our unpaid pledges from the special drive are \$502.50 or less than half our indebtedness, which is \$1,268.28.

Moving thus toward a situation of insolvency, the officers and executive committee have been receiving appeals like the following resolution of a meeting of representatives of the Rock River Conference Commission, the 740 Rush St. Local and the Young People's Social Action group:

"We would consider it to be a major tragedy in the life of the denomination for the Methodist Federation for Social Service to entirely suspend its operations. We consider it advisable for any adjustment to be made that may be necessary in the emergency which will preserve at least a skeleton organization."

A practical suggestion to this end was that "the Bulletin be issued once a month instead of twice a month; or if worse comes to worst, once a quarter, with the announcement that regular schedule will be resumed as soon as possible."

Another was, "Would Miss Chappell and Mrs. Rutherford be willing to carry on, sharing in what money can be brought in?"

On this latter point, these two people, our only salaried staff, had already cut themselves a good deal more than the executive committee was willing officially to do.

Regarding the Bulletin the executive committee concludes that the only alternative to closing down June 1st is to reduce the issues of the Bulletin to six for next year. This would cut out the mid-month and the research number would be issued only bi-monthly. This would mean that, like the depositors in some small banks who have to turn part of their deposits into bank stock in order to avoid the greater loss through bankruptcy, our members would be helping to keep the organization alive by getting less for their subscription instead of being canvassed to pay off the debts of a closed institution.

Your committee feels that to close at this time of the crisis of capitalistic society would be a tragedy which must be avoided if pos-

sible. Certainly it would be an ignominious celebration of our 25th anniversary, especially when one considers the resources and the social-mindedness of our denomination. By the retrenchments above suggested there is a reasonable prospect of gradually paying off our debts.

The question is now up to our members. How do you vote? Will you keep on sending your membership or subscription, as many of you have done when we cut off the *Information Service*, even though you get less in return? Is it worth this sacrifice to avoid having this organization eliminated from the present battle? For if we keep alive we shall as in the past have more than "a name to live."

For the new Bulletin members who come in during this campaign we can, as we have already done, send research material in back numbers which they could not buy anywhere else for \$1. Speaking of money's worth, compare the prices of books and see if you can get as much information anywhere else for a dollar as in six numbers of the Bulletin.

This reduction will not be necessary if the efforts that are now being made by a number of our loyal groups succeed in increasing our Bulletin membership to the necessary point, but the trouble is a decision has to be made for a year in advance. The Post Office requires us to specify exactly how many times a year we will appear.

Therefore, if you want the Bulletin to appear next year (beginning October 1st) as it has done heretofore, *there is only one way it can be done. The Bulletin campaign must be carried to success before June 1st.*

### A Possibility

We are more concerned about getting the necessary information to our people so that they can find their way through the present chaos than we are in keeping an organization going. The closing numbers of our present series, on Socialism and Communism, will appear anyway. How are they being used? Are they being kept as a basis for discussion groups which can be started next fall if they are not going this spring?

We are greatly concerned over our failure to get out more popular educational propaganda for the people to whom our research Bulletins are "high-brow." Our Grace Scribner pamphlets were not, but we failed to find volunteers to circulate them sufficiently.

Now people are beginning to read pam-



phlets again. But who will distribute them? How many of our members will appoint some person to sell pamphlets for us, if we can get them printed?

We have a scheme in mind for printing small envelope-size dodgers, each one containing a pertinent question concerning the present crisis, such as, "Are you likely to be one of the five million unemployed if prosperity comes back?" Or, "Do you want prosperity back? (with five million unemployed) or do you want a new order?" Then would come a reference to reading matter, or the local church might, with a rubber stamp, put on an invitation to a study group or a series of sermons dealing with this matter.

These would have to be sold to local churches to be distributed by them. What do you think of this idea? Would you cooperate in trying it out? Have you any other suggestion for the preparation and distribution of popular educational material in your congregation and community?

### THE FUTILITY OF LIBERALISM?

Those Southern California preachers who started on their big adventure of inaugurating a nonpartisan, nonsectarian, nonpropaganda radio came up against the stone wall of big business, as anyone could have predicted who knew the strength of power politics. (See John Chamberlain's "Farewell to Reform," *Livelihood*, \$3.00). It was in 1925 that the Methodist annual conference launched the plan. The preachers knew what they wanted. They appointed their committees; they enlisted parents and teachers, clubs, universities, and religious groups. Through Gross Alexander, the leading spirit, who made two trips across to Washington, they got their construction permit from the Radio Commission with satisfactory wavelengths and frequency. Also, after a public hearing, they were granted a high-frequency station for international relay broadcasting. In short, they had concessions from the government which the A. T. & T. said in writing might be worth \$5,000,000 on paper, more when the construction was completed.

Then came the rub—raising the money for construction and equipment. Mr. Alexander writes, "The sum of the matter is that we failed . . . I could not see nor understand why in those years. I see very plainly why now." There were good contacts with the Fosticks, Rockefeller, Rosenwald, Vanderbilt, Penney, Filene and others—yet here is the way the story runs on: "In spite of the fact that Southern California wants its name known throughout the world, and despite the fact that there are pools of talent, dramatic and educational and other, in and around Los Angeles, and notwithstanding the eminent Board of Directors, the vice-president of which was Secretary of the Interior under Mr. Hoover, the Better America Federation decided it was 'dangerous' to allow a group of educators and other persons of possible non-commercial mind to control such a stu-

pendous agency of mass communication. So the Los Angeles Chamber of Commerce telegraphed the Federal Radio Commission against us, and sent its manager in person to represent its point of view; the bank of which Henry Robinson is a very important factor (the Security-First National Bank of Los Angeles) told its depositors that if they contributed it would affect their credit; the editor of the *Los Angeles Times*, Harry Chandler, wrote a memorandum telling us our undertaking would be abortive; the local representative of the Radio Corporation of America put out spies to endeavor to get data of discrediting nature; and every other means almost—fair and foul—were used to defeat us." The laconic finale of the tale is, "So our construction permits expired."

### H. F. W.'s BOOK

*Information Service* devotes five of the eight columns in its April 1st issue to H. F. W.'s book "In Place of Profit," saying, "The unique character of the book warrants a more extended treatment than a book review." It comments, "The philosophy of Communism . . . is interpreted in illuminating fashion . . . Mr. Ward's treatment of it is an important contribution to an understanding of Communism." John Haynes Holmes reviewing the book in the *New York Herald-Tribune* says, "Such a tale as is told in this book we have never read before." It is "a picture of the transformation of human nature under the influence of a new type of political and economic organization . . . the confirmation of the classic faith that human nature contains unselfish as well as selfish elements and that the proper social motivation can successfully 'subordinate the self-seeking tendencies . . . to the other seeking and self-losing tendencies'." See February 15th Bulletin for combination offer to our members.

Blaine Kirkpatrick contributes to the attractive *District Epworth League Officer* for March over a page and a half on the M. F. S. S. putting this cause up to the Third Department. \* \* \* The Chicago groups have organized a real campaign and are at work on memberships. \* \* \* Pittsburgh commission urges us to hold the fort—they are coming with help. \* \* \* Twelve new student memberships from Boston School of Theology this week is a concrete proof of the continuing the work reported last month in that area. \* \* \* Raymond Atteberry, of Pacific Northwest, called at the office the other day and promised to start off the campaign up in his area. \* \* \* Not the least appreciated help is that coming in the form of one, two and three single memberships sent by individual members. (By the way, are you making the most of our present series in advertising the Bulletin?)

Scott Nearing's valuable 64-page pamphlet analyzing Fascism can be obtained for 15c by writing to Box 516, Ridgewood, N. J.



## The Social Service Bulletin

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THE METHODIST FEDERATION FOR SOCIAL  
SERVICE.

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The general policies of this publication are determined by the Executive Committee of the Methodist Federation for Social Service, subject to approval by the General Council of the Federation. The selection of topics and material is committed to the Secretaries, who are responsible to the Federation and to the public for its accuracy.

Entered as second class matter, January 21, 1919, at the Post Office of New York, N. Y., under Act of August 24, 1912.

Tucker Smith, of the Committee on Militarism in Education, says "a word of unstinted praise for the Methodists in Maryland" in their support of the case of the Methodist student Ennis H. Coale when he refused to take military training at the University of Maryland.

Once in every five days—that is, so often as our five-day weekly *Moscow News* arrives from the Soviet Union—we wish we could share it with our members. It's an exhilarating little paper. And we can share it. We are giving away back numbers, two or three to a person. (Enclose a 3 cent stamp.)

Six of the ten copies of "Upton Sinclair Presents William Fox," given to us by the author as his contribution in our crisis, have been bought from us at the publishers' price of \$3. Are there four more among our readers who will take the rest—and bring themselves thereby invaluable information about the ways of Wall Street?

Can you use additional single copies, or perhaps small consignments of the Bulletin on Fascism? We are keeping the type standing anticipating that this may be one of those numbers for which requests begin to come in from many unexpected places, as happens now and again when we discuss some subject of marked current interest.

"Let us be realistic, likewise, about self-sacrifice for our country. . . . It is easier to accept the risks of battle for oneself, and even for one's own son, than it is to subordinate desire for profits to love of country. This is a terrible assertion, but experience shows that it is true."—George A. Coe in "Educating for Citizenship." (Scribners, \$2.00.)

Something is happening within our Negro population as the Scottsboro case goes along. It has been happening faster and more furiously since the court decision went against Haywood Patterson and he was sentenced to die. "Harlem is seething" is the way it is expressed here in New York. What will Washington do when the 50,000 Negroes arrive with the mammoth petition? The issue the Communists have raised is now before us.

"I think the church has a few years in

which to redeem itself and to place its influence on the side of dispossessed humanity. I think it still has a few years in which it can throw itself with great abandonment into the struggle. As an institution, this is its only hope. But it will cost the church something. She will lose some of her property. She may lose some of her followers. How can a church with a million dollar property preach a Galilean Christ?"—Roy Burt at Social Action Conference at Pontiac, Ill., last August.

"Think of all the kind souls who stand in horror of a social conflict who are at this moment benefiting from, and living comfortable lives at the expense of, a social system which condemns 13 million men to misery and semi-starvation. Failure to recognize this covert brutality of the social struggle is probably the greatest weakness of middle-class liberals, and it lends a note of hypocrisy and self-deception to every moral pretension which seeks to eliminate violence in the social struggle."—Reinhold Niebuhr.

"*Coal Age*, operators' journal, proposes increased speed-up, including further mechanization and electrification of the mines. This process as carried out under capitalism reduces 'labor costs' for the operators, displaces more miners and throws them into the army of the unemployed. But this fact does not worry *Coal Age*; more than half of each issue is made up of advertisements from companies selling mechanical and electrical devices, guaranteed to result in greater savings—and profits—for the operators."—Mining Notes, Labor Research Association.

In a letter from Owen Geer: "The school boys who guard the traffic for the children crossing the streets in Wichita have always carried little red flags to stop oncoming motorists. The D. A. R. found the red flags altogether too disturbing. They petitioned the school board and succeeded in getting them changed to green flags! I kidded the Wichita High School North Assembly in an address there, and told them that since hearing about that, some of us are seriously considering petitioning God to remove red from the spectrum. I think it is an outrage to have so much red in those Kansas sunsets. I don't know whether the D. A. R. has taken that into consideration or not."

So great is the amount of valuable technical material furnished its \$2 members by Consumers' Research (new address, Washington, N. J.) that one technician wonders whether CR is a racket, "because it was inconceivable that an organization could compile, verify, issue and mail the very large amount of material which CR does on the small subscription fee. . . ." To which CR replies that a large proportion of the staff is working overtime continuously and that most of the consultants do their work at a fraction of what their services would bring in the general market for technician services.



"The profound fallacy behind all capitalistic thinking flows from the theory of profits. It embodies a philosophy of exploitation, of getting something for nothing, of using money as a source of power, of fortune-making by the simple device of paying the actual producer less than his labor is worth. Its dominant principle is that pieces of paper which are evidences of past effort are technical and legal obligations against the results of new effort. Abolish exploitation and there isn't any capitalism. It has to stand or fall on that issue."—W. E. Woodward in "Money for Tomorrow."

"It is manifestly cause for regret and perhaps for introspective inquiry that in the world's present emergences so little of light and leading has come out of the world's universities . . . whether from timidity or perplexity. . . ."—Dean Howard L. McBain, of political science, philosophy and pure science faculties, Columbia University, in his recent report to President Butler. Three weeks earlier, Earl Browder, Secretary of the Communist Party, had said the same thing to an overflow banquet at which many "intellectuals" were present, and then had added words to this effect: "Yet the simplest worker suffering poverty in the midst of plenty can understand that what is needed is to *organize and take*."

Can't the M. F. S. S. have a field worker? The question is raised over and over again. The answer is No. He would have to raise his own salary and that doesn't go successfully with our kind of a message. H. F. W. is sitting down with preachers in one conference after another discussing the present crisis and what our kind of folk can do about it. W. L. C. says that if the Bulletin is published less often so that she is not tied so closely to the office, she is going to take a bus trip—or a hitch-hiking one—across the country visiting our churches. She expects the preachers' families to entertain her, and by way of paying her fare she will sell to selected persons H. F. W.'s "Our Economic Morality" and "In Place of Profit" and some pamphlets.

*But for the most part this cause must go forward through the efforts of our members, each in his own place.*

Woman's Press, Y.W.C.A. organ, comments in its March issue on our BULLETIN, "Can Capitalism Save Itself?": "This leaflet offers no magic formula; it gives you data for making your own."

## AMONG THE BOOKS

By W. L. C.

I personally recommend as far more than ordinarily rewarding H. F. W.'s study of Soviet incentives, "In Place of Profit"; John Strachey's "The Coming Struggle for Power" (Covici-Friede, \$3); the three big volumes of

Trotsky's "History of the Russian Revolution" (Simon and Schuster, \$10) and Lenin's "The Teachings of Karl Marx" (International Publishers, 15 cents). \*\*\* Add to your collection of books raising the question of the survival of capitalism William Kix Miller's "Can Business Build a Great Age?"—and he argues that it can! (Macmillan, \$2.50) \*\*\* J. George Frederick's "Readings in Economic Planning" (Business Bourse, \$3.50) is, among other things, a survey of economic planning and plans. It contains an interesting "diagrammatic chart showing various points of view in regard to economic planning on a left-right scale."

"The Only Way Out," by Emile Burns (International Publishers, \$1.) surveys the crisis and various capitalist plans for its cure and ends by endorsing the revolutionary way out. It is the first in a thoughtful series for British workers \*\*\* The same publishers put us in their debt by bringing up to date the Soviet documents contained in "The Soviet Union and Peace." In "The Soviet's Fight for Disarmament" (boards 35c, paper 25c), they collect recent Geneva speeches by Litvinoff and other documents in this field. \*\*\* "Bolshevism, Fascism and Capitalism" (Yale University Press, \$2.50) contains papers presented at the Williamstown conference in 1932. \*\*\* In "Death and Profits" (Brewer, Warren and Putnam, \$1.50) Seymour Waldman analyzes the hearings of the War Policies Commission, and shows with graphic detail the construction of a huge war machine, which, once war breaks out, will be used—whatever the intent of those responsible for the Commission—in the interest of the profit grabbers.

"The Tragedy of Lynching," by Arthur Raper (University of Carolina Press, \$2.50), sponsored by the Commission of Interracial Cooperation, will quite certainly become forthwith an authority in this field. It is a painstaking and concrete study. Its inclusion of lynching case-studies adds to its value. The point of view is that of the liberal who would have us educate ourselves away from the incredible barbarity of lynch law. \*\*\* Walter Wilson in "Forced Labor in the United States" (International Publishers, \$1.50) attacks a more widespread and hardly less acute cruelty and with different approach. The forced labor that he finds in this country and adequately documents ranges from so-called free wage work, through convict labor, chain gangs, peonage, to forced labor in the colonies. He argues that we will be rid of it all only when we get rid of the profit-takers and their exploiting ways. The job is up to the workers. There is a chapter on "forced labor" in the Soviet Union.

"Our Economic Life in the Light of Christian Ideals," prepared by a special committee of the Federal Council of Churches (Association Press, 90c) is designed for church study groups. It is packed with factual material. In the hands of a teacher who will use it critically and supplement it adequately—for instance, with theory and facts of the class conflict—it may be very useful.